

# HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY.

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## PRIVATE INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE COMPANY'S AGENTS.

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HUDSON'S BAY HOUSE,

London, November 22nd, 1858.

ALTHOUGH in former times the allowances and rations allowed by the custom of the Company were considered to be calculated on a very liberal scale, the Company are aware that of late, complaints have been raised that in those rations some luxuries are omitted which, though used by the labouring classes in modern times, were not thought necessary at the period when the scale of rations was originally arranged.

The Committee are anxious to conform to the change, and they have consequently included Tea and Sugar among the rations to be supplied to all classes of Servants, at the same time, that the option will be given to such as may choose to dispense with those articles, to get an equivalent for the whole, or for a part, in money.

In re-adjusting their Scale of Wages and Rations, the Company have thought it right to take the opinion of some of their retired Chief Factors as to the changes which ought to be made. They have accordingly consulted Mr. D. FINLAYSON and Mr. JAMES HARGRAVE, both of whom have within the last few weeks returned to this country, after forty years connection with the Company, and it is in conformity with their opinion that the present Scale of Wages and Rations has been determined on.

Mr. HARGRAVE, in speaking of Rations, says,

“ I enclose a List of the customary Rations issued at York Factory to the Servants of the Honorable Company. This Scale of rations has, to my knowledge, been in use for the last twenty-eight years, at least, (formerly I believe they were less) and till lately they have ever been considered by the Servants as a most ample allowance. No Tea or Sugar has ever been given gratuitously as rations to labouring Servants, either by the Hudson's Bay or North-West Company. In regard to the giving of Tea and Sugar as portions of their rations to their Servants, I am of opinion that such would be easily done at York Factory and on the Shores of the Hudson's Bay, as also perhaps at all the Stations to the Southward of Portage La Loche ; but in Athabaska, Mackenzie River, and New Caledonia, the requisite quantity of these articles might not always be available at the proper seasons, and a breach of contract on the part of the Company (for in that light would such a failure be interpreted), might be productive of considerable inconvenience.”

To obviate this inconvenience, Mr. HARGRAVE recommends the alternative of Tea and Sugar, or a sum of money in lieu of it ; and you will observe that his recommendation has been adopted.

Mr. HARGRAVE, who was for many years at the head of the Company's affairs at York Factory, speaks particularly of the requirements of that place ; but in allusion to the other Stations, he says :—“ In regard to *Inland* Rations, I am less informed of details, but have

“ always understood that at *fish* Stations a Servant helps himself to as many fish and potatoes, “ free of cost, as he may require for himself and *family*. At *meat* Stations, such as Sas- “ katchewan and Swan River, the same rule prevails, unless in ‘ times of scarcity,’ when the “ rations are weighed to the Servants, being, as I am informed, 8-*lbs.* good Buffalo meat “ for one Servant, half that quantity for a wife, and a quarter for each child, in addition to “ which, they have whatever quantity of potatoes they may choose to consume, all free of cost. “ At these Posts, however, *flour* forms no part of the rations of the Servants, and only a limited “ part of those of the Officers.”

I subjoin a Statement drawn up by Mr. HARGRAVE, of the Standard of Rations supplied at York Factory, by which you will be able to judge of the quantity and quality of the food provided for the men (See List attached).

As it may be important to men engaging to go to so distant a Country to know upon what terms they can obtain supplies of Clothing and other articles not included among the regular rations served out to them, it is as well you should be aware that the Company supplies all the goods in their Stores to their own men on such terms that they cost little, if anything, higher than they do in this Country.

I think it is necessary to give you these particulars for your private guidance. It is not the wish of the Company to hold out expectations to the men in which they will be disappointed, but the men engaging may depend that any promises made to them will be strictly adhered to.

It may be added that as it is understood that some Servants have represented, though we believe without any just cause, that they have a difficulty in obtaining a settlement of their accounts while at the Stations, or of ascertaining how their balances with the Company stand, till their return to this Country, directions have been given to the Officers in charge of all the Stations that every man in the service is to be furnished annually with a Copy of his account, so that he may know his precise position.

The Company’s Ships sail for Hudson’s Bay in June, and all servants contracting to enter the service of the Company must be prepared to embark either in London, Stornoway, or Stromness, according to circumstances, of which due notice will be given.

Should the servants engaged be required to come to London for Embarcation the expenses of their journey will be paid by the Company, and in all cases they will be put on board free of expense.

The following is a Statement of Labourers, Mechanics, and Boatmen, required for the service of the Hudson’s Bay Company in 1859.

54 Labourers,  
 2 Coopers,  
 3 Blacksmiths,  
 3 Boat-builders,  
 1 Tinsmith.

—  
 Total 63  
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Standard of Rations supplied at York Factory to engaged Servants, viz. :—

	1 lb. Flour, baked into Bread, per diem ; also			
2 lbs. Scotch Barley . . . . .	1 day's Rations with 1 lb. Flour, as above.			
2 „ Oatmeal . . . . .	1 „ „ 1 „ „			
1 quart Peas . . . . .	1 „ „ 1 „ „			
2 lbs. Fresh or Salt Beef . . . . .	1 „ „ 1 „ „			
1 $\frac{1}{4}$ „ Salt Pork . . . . .	1 „ „ 1 „ „			
2 „ Pemican . . . . .	1 „ „ 1 „ „			
2 „ Dried Meat . . . . .	1 „ „ 1 „ „			
1 Salt or Fresh Goose . . . . .	1 „ „ 1 „ „			
2 or 3 Salt or Fresh Ducks . . . . .	1 „ „ 1 „ „			
6 „ „ Plover . . . . .	1 „ „ 1 „ „			
2 or 3 Fresh Lake Fish, 3 <i>a</i> 5-lbs. each	1 „ „ 1 „ „			
8 „ River „ . . . . .	1 „ „ 1 „ „			
4 lbs. Fresh Venison . . . . .	1 „ „ 1 „ „			
4 Rabbits . . . . .	1 „ „ 1 „ „			
4 Partridges . . . . .	1 „ „ 1 „ „			

Also 2 lbs. Tallow per month.

2 Gallons Molasses for the Winter,

And an allowance of Grocery, Fresh Food and Liquors extra at Christmas and New Year.

N.B.—No Liquor Rations are issued at the Factory, but *drams* are always given when the duty performed is either extra heavy, or when much exposing the Servant to wet or cold.

Specimen of a Servant's Weekly Rations, as issued agreeably to the foregoing Scale, viz. :—

7-lbs. Flour, baked into Bread.

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 And  $\frac{1}{2}$  Ration Barley,  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  „ Oatmeal,  
 1 „ Pork,  
 1 „ Pemican,  
 1 „ Salt or Fresh Goose,  
 1 „ Fish,  
 1 „ Partridges,  
 1 „ Fresh Venison.

—  
 7 Rations.

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 Also  $\frac{1}{2}$ -lb. Tallow, and  
 A proportion of 2 Gallons Molasses.

THOMAS FRASER,

SECRETARY.

HUDSON'S BAY HOUSE,

London, November 22nd, 1858.

